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ABSTRACT

Written for potential users of ERIC, this digest provides basic facts about the information storage and retrieval system, the migrant education materials available, and the role of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools (ERIC/CRESS). The following questions are answered: (1) what is ERIC and how does it work; (2) what retrieval terms should be used to find migrant education materials; (3) what types of publications will be found and what audiences will be addressed in ERIC documents about migrant education; (4) where do migrant documents in ERIC come from; and (5) how can ERIC/CRESS assist the person seeking information? Practical suggestions are made for successful computer searches. These include limiting the search to specific years, specific authors, certain kinds of literature, or geographic regions of interest. (JHZ)

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MIGRANT EDUCATION: A QUICK LOOK AT ERIC

By

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March 1984

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

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MIGRANT EDUCATION

Digest — 1984

MIGRANT EDUCATION: A QUICK LOOK AT ERIC

What is ERIC?

ERIC (or the Educational Resources Information Center) is a national information storage and retrieval system funded by the National Institute of Education. ERIC collects and processes (catalogs, indexes, and abstracts) unpublished materials for its monthly announcement journal, **Resources in Education** (RIE). Journal literature is monitored and processed (indexed and annotated) in the monthly announcement journal, **Current Index to Journals in Education** (CIJE).

Sixteen ERIC Clearinghouses scattered throughout the United States provide the collection and processing expertise necessary to maintain the system. The ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools (ERIC/CRESS) is responsible for locating and processing migrant education materials. Since 1966 (when ERIC began) through October 1983, more than 2,200 migrant related-materials have been included in the ERIC collection. ERIC provides an easily accessible, useful source of information on migrant education.

How does ERIC work?

ERIC's storage and retrieval system is accessed through a system of key words called retrieval terms, descriptors, or identifiers. These terms can be found in two ERIC tools called the **Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors** and the **ERIC identifier Authority List.** It is not necessary to have access to these two tools in order to use ERIC, but they are helpful in narrowing your search most effectively.

An individual using indexes provided in monthly issues of RIE and CIJE (there are annual indexes, also) can do very satisfactory searches on single topics. Computer searches provide more comprehensive results when your search involves the correlations of two or more concepts.

Once you have determined the RIE document literature desired, you can find most of the documents on microfiche (4 in. x 6 in. microfilm cards) at your nearest ERIC collection. These collections can be found at 779 sites in the United States and in other countries and are usually found in college or university libraries. The CIJE journal literature can usually be found in the periodical references section of your nearest college or university library. It is also possible to purchase materials cited in RIE and CIJE.

What retrieval terms should I use to find migrant education materials?

The following is a list of ERIC retrieval terms related to migrant education. It indicates how many items in ERIC have entered the system for each listed term from July 1966 through 1983:

Migrant Adult Education	52
Migrant Children	454
Migrant Education	1,149
Migrant Employment	82
Migrant Health Services	162
Migrant Housing	98
Migrant Problems	174
Migrant Programs	140
Migrant Welfare Services	76
Migrant Workers	475
Migrant Youth	126
Migrants	451

Most migrant documents coordinate aspects of migrant education with other characteristics of the educational scene. The following list illustrates how many times some terms have been used coordinately with migrant terms:

Academic Achievement	163
Computer Assisted Instruction	9
Secondary Education, Secondary Schools, or Secondary School Students	262

Remember, the most successful way to coordinate retrieval terms is by doing a computer search:

1. Make sure that the person conducting your computer search thoroughly understands what you want to know.
2. In addition to helping you define your search terms, the computer searcher can help you determine if you want to search the entire collection (1966 to 1984) or just the most recent years.
3. The searcher can also limit your search to specific kinds of literature, such as curriculum guides.
4. You can even specify the state or region on which you would like to focus.
5. The work of specific authors can be located as well as the work produced by different school districts or other educational institutions.

What will I find in ERIC on migrant education when I do a search?

There are many different kinds of literature in both RIE and CIJE. Each item placed in the ERIC database is assigned one or more publication types. A publication type index is found in the back of the monthly issues and semi-annual indexes of RIE. A computer search can scan publication types for both RIE and CIJE. The ability to search on ERIC publication types is a fairly recent development, so materials earlier than September 1974 are not easily retrieved by this feature. Among the types of ERIC materials dealing with migrants (and the number of items for each) are:

Guides for teachers	64
Guides for students	17
Guides for administrators, counselors, parents	73
Legal/legislative/regulatory materials	45
Viewpoints (opinion or position papers)	53
Bibliographies	44
Directories	26
General reports	14
Evaluate/feasibility reports	73
Research/technical reports	266
Speeches, conference papers	84
Tests, evaluation instruments	9

Can I find materials prepared with me in mind?

Another recent ERIC capability will provide access to RIE materials through use of a new "audience" designation. If an item specifically states that it has been prepared for a certain group, then that "audience" will be assigned as a retrievable concept. The "audience" categories include policymakers, researchers, practitioners (administrators, teachers, counselors, media staff, and support staff), students, parents, and the community. Since this innovation was implemented in January 1984, older ERIC document literature will not carry an "audience" designation.

Where do migrant documents in ERIC come from?

ERIC/CRESS locates and processes most of the migrant materials that become a part of the ERIC database. (A few "overlap" items are processed by other ERIC clearinghouses.) Documents are acquired from school districts, state departments of education, individual professionals, colleges and universities, migrant resource centers, etc. You are cordially invited to share your work with ERIC. Do not consider your work too modest; it just may help fill a gap in the literature. Send your materials to CRESS and let us make the selection decision. Remember, the database is only as useful as the material within allows it to be, so please—share.

How can ERIC/CRESS assist me?

CRESS staff can (1) tell you the location of your nearest ERIC collection, (2) assist you in conducting an ERIC search, (3) provide you with additional information (in Spanish or English) on how to use ERIC, (4) place your name on the mailing list to receive the "CRESS-NOTES" news bulletin, (5) send you a listing of free CRESS materials as well as a list of monographs published by CRESS, and (6) supply you with information on how to acquire an ERIC collection (also in Spanish or English) for your organization. Do not hesitate to write or call if you have any questions. Remember, too, that you can assist everyone by contributing your work to ERIC. You can also assist by apprising us of the work of others. Please address your questions and your document contributions to:

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